



Administration for Children and Families

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Child Welfare Training: The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute

HHS-2013-ACF-ACYF-CT-0596

Application Due Date: 07/05/2013

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**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Program Office: Administration on Children, Youth and Families - Children's Bureau
Funding Opportunity Title: Child Welfare Training: The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute
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Executive Summary

Notices:

- On January 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families implemented required electronic application submission via www.grants.gov for discretionary grant applications. Please see *Section III.3. Disqualification Factors*, *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission* and *Application Submission Options*, and *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates and Times* for information on electronic application submission and the availability of exemptions allowing applicants to submit applications in paper format.
- This Fiscal Year (FY 2013) ACF has implemented a new application upload requirement. Each applicant applying electronically via www.grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files. Please see *Section IV.2 Content and Form of Application Submission* for detailed information on this requirement.

The Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) is committed to facilitating healing and recovery and promoting the social and emotional well-being of children and youth who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma. These goals will only be realized if the child welfare workforce is equipped to respond to the complex needs of children, youth, and their families in order to foster social and emotional well-being and promote healthy and positive functioning. Well-conceived policies, innovative programs designs, and relevant research findings are critical; but of equal importance is the investment in making sure the people working with children, youth, and families in the child welfare systems have the personal characteristics, skills, knowledge, resources, and support to do their jobs with excellence. The purpose of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is to announce a targeted 5-year cooperative agreement with the Children's Bureau for the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (Workforce Institute). This project will advance federal priorities to improve safety, permanency, and well-being by building the capacity of child welfare professionals and improving the organizations that recruit, train, supervise, manage, and retain them.

The Workforce Institute will be a national center of excellence to address workforce development and leadership capacity building. Understanding that high-quality child welfare professionals will only stay in

child welfare if the organizations they serve in are functioning well, the Workforce Institute will also demonstrate national leadership and innovation in assisting child welfare agencies to understand best practices in worker retention and implement organizational interventions that seek to improve the workplace.

Positive systemic change and improved outcomes for children, youth, and families require the engagement of staff at all levels of the organization. Organizational leadership and staff must be prepared and committed in order to pursue systemic change in service of improved outcomes for children, youth, and families. Systemic change is a complex issue requiring comprehensive solutions, which can only be accomplished if the workforce has the capacity for the work and the commitment of the organization.

The Workforce Institute will play a national leadership role in the field in the following broad areas: building evidence of best practices in workforce development, providing leadership training across the career spectrum, supporting organizational interventions that improve culture and climate in child welfare agencies, and demonstrating how the academic community can effectively partner with child welfare agencies to build the capacity of the child welfare workforce. A broad range of activities will be undertaken by the Workforce Institute to promote effective child welfare practice and support leadership development and skill-building. The Workforce Institute will be responsible for the following key components:

University Partnerships To Support Workforce Development

1. Identifying, selecting, and administering traineeship projects for local, professional educational traineeships. These traineeship programs will include a stipend/scholar program, an organizational intervention component linking the school of social work with the local public child welfare agency, and will include developing and delivering new curriculum on trauma-informed and evidence-based practice.

Leadership Training Across the Child Welfare Career Spectrum

2. Cultivating leadership development across the child welfare career spectrum (for example, deans and directors of schools of social work, State/Tribal child welfare directors, middle managers, supervisors, pre- service and post- service child welfare professionals). Learning opportunities will focus on developing leadership and change management skills in order for child welfare professionals to be more effective at implementing workforce development initiatives.

Organizational Interventions To Improve Workforce Retention

3. Implementing three to four in-depth workforce development projects in States and tribes. These projects will focus on assisting public child welfare agencies in implementing interventions to change organizational culture resulting in workforce retention and organizational effectiveness.
4. Providing technical assistance to States and tribes on topics such as best practices in child welfare workforce recruitment, selection, retention, and organizational effectiveness and/or implementing statewide training for middle managers and supervisors.

Building Evidence of Best Practices in Workforce Development

5. Convening a national workforce advisory body.
6. Developing a workforce development framework and identification of core competencies in child welfare staff.
7. Building knowledge and managing knowledge of best practices in child welfare workforce development.
8. Demonstrating expertise in disseminating information about effective and promising workforce practices.
9. Designing and implementing an evaluation plan of all key components of the Workforce Institute.

The maximum award amount for funding of the Workforce Institute described in this

funding announcement is anticipated to be \$4,100,000 per year over a 5-year project period.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Statutory Authority

The legislative authority for this FOA comes from Section 426 (a)(1)(C) of the Social Security Act, as amended [42U.S.C. 626 (a)(1)(C)].

Description

BACKGROUND

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the federal government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves. Within HHS, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is the agency responsible for federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. The Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) within ACF, administers national programs for children and youth; works with States, tribes, and local communities to develop services that support and strengthen family life; seeks joint ventures with the private sector to enhance the lives of children and their families; and provides information and other assistance to parents. Many of the programs administered by ACYF focus on children from low-income families; abused and neglected children; children and youth in need of foster care, independent living, adoption, or other child welfare services; preschool children; children with disabilities; runaway and homeless youth; and children from Native American and migrant families.

The Children's Bureau

Within ACYF, the Children's Bureau (CB) plans, manages, coordinates, and supports child abuse and neglect prevention, and child welfare services programs. CB is the agency within the federal government that is responsible for assisting child welfare systems by promoting continuous improvement in the delivery of child welfare services. CB programs are designed to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of all children, including those in foster care, available for adoption, recently adopted, abused, neglected, dependent, disabled, or homeless, and to prevent the neglect, abuse, and exploitation of children. (For more information about CB's programs, visit <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb>).

Ensuring the Well-Being of Vulnerable Children and Families

ACYF is committed to facilitating healing and recovery and promoting the social and emotional well-being of children who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma. This FOA and other discretionary spending this fiscal year are designed to ensure that effective interventions are in place to build skills and capacities that contribute to the healthy, positive, and productive functioning of children and youth into adulthood.

Children who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma are impacted along several domains, each of which must be addressed in order to foster social and emotional well-being and promote healthy, positive functioning:

- **Understanding Experiences:** A fundamental aspect of the human experience is the development of a world view through which one's experiences are understood. Whether that perspective is generally positive or negative impacts how experiences are interpreted and integrated. For example, one is more likely to approach a challenge as a surmountable, temporary obstacle if his or her frame includes a sense that "things will turn out alright." On the contrary, negative experiences can color how future experiences are understood. Ongoing experiences of abuse might lead children to

believe they deserve to be maltreated and affect their ability to enter into and stay engaged in safe and healthy relationships. Interventions should seek to address how young people frame what has happened to them in the past and their beliefs about the future.

- **Developmental Tasks:** People grow physically and psychosocially along a fairly predictable course, encountering normal challenges and establishing competencies as they pass from one developmental stage to another. However, adverse events have a marked effect on the trajectory of normal social and emotional development, delaying the growth of certain capacities, and, in many cases, accelerating the maturation of others. Intervention strategies must be attuned to the developmental impact of negative experiences and address related strengths and deficits to ensure children and youth develop along a healthy trajectory.
- **Coping Strategies:** The methods that young people develop to manage challenges both large and small are learned in childhood, honed in adolescence, and practiced in adulthood. Those who have been presented with healthy stressors and opportunities to overcome them with appropriate encouragement and support are more likely to have an array of positive, productive coping strategies available to them as they go through life. For children who grow up in unsafe, unpredictable environments, the coping strategies that may have protected them in that context may not be appropriate for safer, more regulated situations. Interventions should help children and youth transform maladaptive coping methods into healthier, more productive strategies.
- **Protective Factors:** A wealth of research has demonstrated that the presence of certain contextual factors (e.g., supportive relatives, involvement in after-school activities) and characteristics (e.g., self-esteem, relationship skills) can moderate the impacts of past and future negative experiences. These protective factors are fundamental to resilience; building them is integral to successful intervention with children, youth, and families.

The skills and capacities in these areas support children and youth as challenges, risks, and opportunities arise. In particular, each domain impacts the capacity of young people to establish and maintain positive relationships with caring adults and supportive peers. The necessity of these relationships to social and emotional well-being and lifelong success in school, community, and at home cannot be overstated and should be integral to all interventions with vulnerable children and youth. Additionally, building these skills and capacities through the implementation of effective interventions will ready children, youth, and families for positive permanency outcomes.

An important component of promoting social and emotional well-being includes addressing the impact of trauma, which can have a profound effect on the overall functioning of children and youth. ACYF promotes a trauma-informed approach, which involves understanding and responding to the symptoms of chronic interpersonal trauma and traumatic stress across the domains outlined above, as well as the behavioral and mental health sequelae of trauma.

ACYF anticipates a continued focus on social and emotional well-being as a critical component of its overall mission to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children.

Working With Other CB Discretionary Grant Project

CB currently funds approximately 300 discretionary grant projects in over 50 program areas. Through their work with a broad spectrum of populations within the child welfare arena, discretionary grantees develop a wealth of knowledge across numerous program areas. The findings from these programs can be useful in informing the field. Projects are strongly encouraged to utilize the knowledge being developed by CB discretionary research and demonstration projects and other related Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) activities when developing proposals in response to this FOA. For more information on CB discretionary grant programs, please see [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov/ programs/ cb/ grants/ discretionary-grant](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/grants/discretionary-grant) and http://basis.caliber.com/cbgrants/ws/library/docs/cb_grants/GrantHome.

The Role of Workforce Development Initiatives

The role of workforce development initiatives in the field of child welfare is critical. For children who

have experienced trauma, healing and recovery take place in safe, nurturing contexts. The foundation to an approach that promotes well-being is a knowledgeable workforce assuring the use of an effective, trauma-informed response to the children and families they serve. In order to meet the goals of promoting social and emotional well-being, it is of great priority to increase the capacity of the workforce to meet the needs of children and families (ACYF, 2012).

“Practically from the beginning of being a federal agency, CB has believed that a highly competent workforce is the essential element of child welfare practice and the key to responding effectively to child and families in need” (Lynch Thomas, 2012). CB believes that building an effective and efficient workforce is as critical a goal for child welfare agencies as building an array of quality services and interventions. The implementation of evidence-based treatment services is dependent upon the effectiveness of the professionals at all levels of child welfare agencies providing support to vulnerable children, youth, and families. Children, youth and families who come into contact with the child welfare systems deserve evidence-informed assistance from a committed and skilled child welfare workforce, supported by well-functioning, well-managed and high performing child welfare agencies. A causal relationship exists between capable child welfare agency workforce and positive case outcomes (ACF, 2006).

The Children’s Bureau intends to pursue a multi-pronged approach to building the capacity of the child welfare workforce. First, those who provide front line services to children and families must be recruited, educated, trained, supported, and developed professionally in innovative ways. Building the child welfare workforce requires people with excellent skills doing high-quality work. Second, agencies must improve their organizational cultures if they intend to retain their workforce and achieve better outcomes for children and families. CB wishes to support healthy child welfare organizations that value their people, support best practices in case management, provide evidence-based treatment and hospitable environments for effective interventions, and effectively collaborate with partner agencies to ensure that children and families are safe, healing, and thriving. Third, academic partners need to include in their curriculum the content knowledge that will teach the wide array of skills needed to prepare high quality professionals in child welfare. In the academies that train and in agencies that serve, the desired result is to support the workforce to promote the social and emotional well-being of children and families.

Achieving safety, permanency, and well-being for children requires that child welfare professionals be knowledgeable and skilled and have access to necessary resources. Unfortunately, public, private, and tribal agencies are often faced with challenges that can compromise the health, competence, and effectiveness of their respective workforces. In 2003, Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) findings reported that high turnover and staffing shortages increased the workload burden on remaining caseworkers. Consequently, this greater burden resulted in delayed maltreatment investigations, fewer worker visits with children and their families, limited opportunities for relationship-building, and hastened decision-making that affected systems’ abilities to ensure the safety and placement stability of children served. The reviews have also shown that while many states are able to meet basic criteria for providing initial training to workers and supervisors before they begin work for the agency, only about half of the States provide sufficient ongoing training to ensure workers’ skills and practice knowledge are able to meet the complex needs of their clients (DHHS, 2011). “There is a national picture unfolding that makes it clear that even basic casework practice, such as assessing children and parents, involving them in case planning, and having consistent caseworker contact, needs significant improvement to provide excellent care in order to achieve permanency and protect the safety and wellbeing of children and families involved in the child welfare systems” (Lynch Thomas, 2012).

CB is engaged in ongoing efforts to respond to findings from the CFSRs and other monitoring reviews. Through its child welfare training initiatives and other discretionary programs, CB promotes the development and dissemination of promising and proven approaches to workforce problems. CB expects that this will result in the delivery of more appropriate, responsive, and effective services to children and their families. Building the capacity of child welfare systems to effectively recruit, train, supervise,

manage, support, and retain the workforce of child welfare professionals has become one of CB's focused and key strategies for achieving systemic change in public child welfare.

Child Welfare Training Initiatives under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act

Legislative authority for the initiative described in this program announcement comes from Title IV-B, Subpart I—Child Welfare Services of the Social Security Act (the Act). Under Section 426 (a)(1)(C) of the Act, federal grants are available to public or non-profit institutions of higher learning for special training projects and traineeships in the field of child welfare.

In an effort to support the recruitment and retention of qualified staff in child welfare, CB has funded professional education traineeships for many years. In the late 1970s, CB defined the scope of the Section 426, title IV-B training grants, as inclusive of three complementary purposes: the development of child welfare trainers, educators, and curricula, the provision of financial support for short term training of public and private agency staff working in child welfare; and, the coverage of educational costs of students in their final years of college or graduate school (Lynch Thomas, 2012). Traineeships are awarded to institutions of higher education to administer stipends to individual students who commit to pursuing either a BSW or MSW degree in social work and to serving in a child welfare agency upon graduation. In recent years, approximately 40 States have partnered with approximately 80 schools of social work to support the education and training of child welfare staff (Lynch Thomas, 2012).

In 2003, CB also funded eight 5-year projects to demonstrate successful recruitment and retention strategies. This group of projects has demonstrated promising strategies for the selection, hiring, and retention of qualified child welfare staff. (Previous Recruitment and Retention grantees and links to their websites are listed in Appendix A. Additional information on Child Welfare Training projects is available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/discretionary/cw_training.htm.) In 2005, ACF sponsored a Child Welfare Workforce Development and Workplace Enhancement Institute that brought federal experts, public and private agencies, universities, and other child-welfare serving agencies together to share best practices on recruiting and retaining a stable and highly skilled child welfare workforce.

In 2008, as a result of knowledge developed and lessons learned through the Retention and Recruitment grants, CB funded the first National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) to build the capacity of the nation's child welfare workforce through activities that focused on supporting the development of skilled child welfare leaders in public and tribal child welfare systems and in private agencies contracted by the State to provide case management services traditionally provided by public child welfare. CB invested in NCWWI because of a belief that developing leaders at every level of the workforce, whether student, supervisor, middle manager, or agency director is an important effort if the child welfare workforce is to be transformed. NCWWI articulates their vision (NCCWI, 2012) for a child welfare workforce that is:

- Strengthened by professional education and leadership development;
- Supported by organizational practices that mirror systems of care principles;
- Led by middle managers and supervisors who engage in designing and delivering effective services; and
- Skilled at delivering promising practices that improve outcomes for children and families.

To promote effective child welfare practice and leadership development, the NCWWI undertook a number of activities, including but not limited to developing and delivering leadership training for mid-level managers and supervisors, administering child welfare professional education traineeship programs, advancing knowledge through collaboration and evaluation, and identifying and strategically disseminating effective and promising workforce practices.

The NCWWI initiated 12 traineeship projects in 2008. The NCWWI was responsible for administering and evaluating these professional education stipend programs throughout the 5 years of the project. The intent of the traineeships is to increase the knowledge and skills of individual stipend recipients, especially related to leadership development; address the workforce challenges of local child welfare systems; and

build the capacity of college and university social work programs to prepare students for positive, culturally-competent, and productive careers in child welfare.

Additionally, in 2008, CB separately funded five Comprehensive Workforce Projects whose purpose was to build the capacity of the child welfare workforce through targeted workforce development interventions and traineeships that build on promising workforce practices. These cooperative agreements have provided universities and agencies the opportunity to partner and focus on assessments and interventions to improve agency culture and climate.

Child Welfare Training and Technical Assistance Network

CB provides training and technical assistance (T/TA) resources through its grants, contracts and cooperative agreements. CB-supported T/TA providers include the National Child Welfare Resource Centers (NRCs) that work together to assist States, tribes, localities, and courts to improve public child welfare systems. The purpose of these providers is to build the capacity of State and tribal child welfare agencies and family and juvenile courts through the provision of training, technical assistance, research, and consultation on the full array of federal requirements administered by CB.

CB employs several monitoring tools to ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements to help States achieve greater safety, permanency and well-being for children. While a major function of the CB-supported T/TA is to prepare States for child welfare monitoring and to help them apply the knowledge gained from these reviews, the ultimate purpose of the T/TA is to improve child welfare systems and to support States in achieving sustainable, systemic change that yields better outcomes for children, youth, and families.

CB's T/TA providers hold expertise in multiple aspects of child welfare practice. They are expected to provide resources and assistance that will support and facilitate positive change, and in some cases, comprehensive cross-system reforms that will build State or tribal capacity to deliver quality child welfare services and result in more effective and promising practice. CB and its providers utilize a variety of strategies to deliver T/TA to States and tribes.

In order to meet the requirements of this FOA, the Workforce Institute will perform activities that complement the services of other CB-supported T/TA providers. The Workforce Institute will partner closely with other CB-funded workforce development initiatives and with the Child Welfare Information Gateway (CWIG), a national clearinghouse that connects child welfare and other professionals to resources, information, and online tools that cover a wide range of topics related to child welfare, child abuse and neglect, and adoption ([http:// www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)). CWIG supports CB and provides numerous resources, including product development; dissemination/outreach via web, print, and electronic formats; websites and databases; and other online learning tools for improving child welfare practice.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUIREMENTS

Tips for Preparing a Competitive Application

It is essential that applicants read the entire announcement package carefully before preparing an application and include all of the required application forms and attachments. The application must reflect a thorough understanding of and support the purpose and objectives of the applicable legislation. Reviewers expect grantees to understand the goals of the legislation and CB's interest in each topic and to address and follow all of the evaluation criteria in ways that demonstrate this understanding. Applications that do not clearly address the evaluation criteria or program requirements generally receive very low scores and are rarely funded.

CB's website ([http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/ programs/ cb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb)) provides a wide range of information and links to other relevant websites. Before preparing an application, grantees can learn more about CB's mission and programs by exploring the website.

Target Participants and Consumers

Institutionalizing effective workforce practices and improving child welfare outcomes requires leadership. Leadership is needed to change vision, culture, beliefs, and to move the organization to better practices. Facilitating and sustaining positive systems change requires that an agency's leadership possess content knowledge as well as a variety of core competencies and practice skills and a commitment to organizational effectiveness. CB recognizes that leadership does not reside exclusively in executive offices and that responsibility for change lies with professionals across the spectrum of child welfare roles. Well-trained leaders at all levels are needed for child welfare agencies to successfully meet the challenges of providing timely, appropriate services and to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families.

Members of the child welfare workforce, from agency directors, and directors of human resource departments, to middle managers, supervisors, and public child welfare professionals directly serving children and families, to prospective child welfare professionals who are pursuing social work degrees, child welfare faculty, and deans and directors of schools of social work are the target population and consumers of the training, organizational interventions, and knowledge developed by the Workforce Institute.

The Workforce Institute's leadership activities will include training for middle managers and supervisors as well as leadership development opportunities for Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work and Child Welfare Agency Directors.

Collaboration

The Workforce Institute must partner closely with CB throughout the funding period to meet the goals of this program announcement. As a participant in a cooperative agreement, the grantee can expect to closely collaborate with CB in the review of its proposed activities. In some cases, they will revise and jointly develop key project strategies. CB must approve project plans and activities prior to implementation.

Responsibility for supporting workforce development in child welfare systems is not the sole role of any single project or entity. In addition to its partnership with CB, the grantee will be responsible for collaborating with other federal projects, including but not limited to, National Child Welfare Resource Centers, the Child Welfare Information Gateway, and other CB-funded and federal interagency projects aimed at increasing the capacity of the workforce to meet the needs of children and families.

Outreach and Engagement

In order to successfully reach its target audiences and achieve its goals for participation and use of Workforce Institute tools and resources, the grantee must have clear and deliberate strategies for outreach and engagement. The Workforce Institute must engage its intended consumers in the development and refinement of its training activities and products. The project will seek feedback from members of its target audience(s) throughout the project period to better understand workforce development needs, inform project activities, review curricula and product-related content, and proposed dissemination strategies.

Program Strategies and Activities

University Partnership Projects

Section 426(a)(1)(C) of the Social Security Act (the Act), as amended, authorizes funds for child welfare training, including stipends for professional education traineeships. The Workforce Institute will allocate funding for traineeship projects in partnership with other public and/or nonprofit institutions of higher education with accredited social work education programs. Historically, at least 30 percent of the annual award amount was designated for university partnership funding as it is a principal focus of the legislation authorizing these funds. These 5-year projects will support professional education for current or prospective child welfare practitioners who are currently enrolled or who plan to enroll in BSW or MSW social work programs. A minimum of ten traineeship projects shall be identified, selected and administered in partnership with eligible institutions of higher education. These projects will include direct stipends to students, administration of the stipends, participation in a cross-site evaluation, and provision of

additional support services for students that will increase the likelihood of traineeship completion and retention of graduates in the field of child welfare. Each traineeship project must be at least \$150,000 annually or \$750,000 over the entire 5-year project period.

Section 426(c) of the Act requires assurances (and subsequent evidence of compliance after traineeship completion) that each individual stipend recipient will participate in regular training at a child welfare agency during the course of the traineeship and work at a child welfare agency for a number of years equivalent to the period of the traineeship after obtaining the degree for which the stipend was awarded. Additionally, Section 426 (c) of the Act also requires that the institutions involved in the traineeship projects will enter in to agreements with child welfare agencies for onsite training of stipend recipients, will permit an individual who is employed in the field of child welfare services to apply for traineeship if the traineeship furthers the progress of the individual toward the completion of degree requirements and finally, that the institution will develop and implement a system that for a three year period that begins on the date any recipient completes a child welfare services program of study, tracks the employment record of the recipient, for the purpose of determining the percentage of recipients who secure employment in the field of child welfare services and remain employed in the field. (Full text of Section 426 of the Social Security Act is available at [http:// www.ssa.gov/ OP_Home/ ssact/ title04/ 0426.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title04/0426.htm)).

All traineeship projects must be implemented as early as possible during the first fiscal year of the cooperative agreement. The Workforce Institute must provide traineeship projects with sufficient time to select individual traineeship stipends prior to the start of the academic year in the fall of 2014.

CB intends for BSW and MSW professional education traineeships to increase the knowledge and skills of individual stipend recipients, to address the specific needs and workforce challenges of local child welfare systems, and to build the capacity of college and university social work programs to prepare students for careers in the child welfare workforce. The Workforce Institute's stipend projects are expected to ensure the meaningful integration of each stipend project into a partnering child welfare agency's broader, comprehensive plan for workforce capacity-building. A traineeship project in partnership with its county child welfare agency may be designed to offer BSW or MSW traineeships as a tool to recruit and prepare new child welfare professionals for work with children and families in underserved rural communities. By contrast, another project might offer MSW traineeship stipends to current American Indian child welfare supervisors to support the development and retention of qualified and underrepresented native professionals in its partnering State and tribal agencies. The Workforce Institute may choose to target particular degree candidates, types of professionals, or minority populations to address critical workforce needs when identifying and developing the ten stipend projects.

In addition to serving as a means to address specific agencies' workforce challenges, projects are also intended to encourage partnering institutions of higher education to develop and improve their child welfare training curricula and programs. The Workforce Institute will partner with institutions of higher education that are prepared to provide competency-based child welfare training that places emphasis on developing critical knowledge, values, skills, and characteristics that are necessary to respond to complex problems confronting children and families in the child welfare system. The goal of these projects is to support Schools of Social Work to implement specialized curriculum to prepare the best and brightest students for the unique demands of serving in public child welfare.

Selected university projects will provide:

1. A traineeship program that provides financial assistance to select trainees;
2. An educational program that increases the knowledge and skills and leadership capacity of individual stipend recipients to address the social and emotional needs of children, youth, and families served by child welfare agencies;
3. The development and improvement of child welfare curricula on the developmental and functional consequences of trauma and evidence-based practices to increase their skill level, professional

- practice and leadership ability, and to support retention in child welfare workforce; and
4. An organizational intervention component linking the school of social work with the local public child welfare agency. This organizational intervention should be tailored to the specific needs of the local public child welfare agency and should have a strong evaluation component.

Leadership Training

The Workforce Institute's responsibility for national leadership training is intended to complement regional and local systems of child welfare training rather than replace or supersede training that occurs at the State, county, or tribal levels. The Workforce Institute's training and dissemination activities (see Section IV.2, Dissemination) will target a national child welfare audience and primarily address: leadership development, capacity to implement change, best and promising workforce practices in child welfare, and CB's national priorities for ensuring social and emotional well-being.

Expanding on the work of NCWWI, a 5-year initiative awarded to the Research Foundation of SUNY at the University of Albany in September 2008, the Workforce Institute will continue to cultivate leadership at multiple levels within child welfare agencies and expand the skills and knowledge of child welfare professionals that serve in public child welfare systems. The Workforce Institute is expected to deliver the previously evaluated leadership training curricula: the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers 5-day training and the 40-hour online Leadership Academy for Supervisors training. The grantee is encouraged to demonstrate creativity in proposing how this tested curriculum might be delivered in certain jurisdictions statewide or in conjunction with traineeship programs. The grantee might propose how the leadership academies could be used to create distance learning opportunities for selected participants or to form national "virtual" classrooms on leadership. Grantees have considerable flexibility in their proposals to further specify particular groups to whom its training and services will be aimed, to define the scope of curricula and activities that will be provided, and to propose the number of professionals that will be served.

Leadership Academy for Middle Managers

The Workforce Institute will use the Leadership Academy of Middle Managers (LAMM) curriculum that was developed and evaluated by NCWWI under the 2003-2008 cooperative agreement between CB and the Research Foundation of SUNY at the University of Albany. LAMM will be delivered to mid-level managers in public, private (if under contract with the State or county child welfare agency), and/or tribal child welfare agencies. For the purposes of this program component, middle managers include: State or tribal, central office, regional, and district child welfare administrators, assistant directors and staff; managers employed at the State/central office or regional office that provide support to local child welfare offices; State and tribal child welfare program managers; and program directors at private agencies under contract with the State or county to provide child welfare services.

For the purposes of this announcement, CB will no longer require that LAMM be delivered in cities that are also sites of CB Regional Offices. CB is interested in innovative strategies to deliver the leadership curriculum effectively and efficiently to as many child welfare middle managers as possible and even more specifically is interested in evaluating if the training is more effective if provided to multiple middle managers in the same jurisdiction.

Leadership Academy for Supervisors

The Workforce Institute will use the Leadership Academy for Supervisors (LAS) online curriculum that was developed and evaluated by NCWWI under the 2003-2008 cooperative agreement between CB and the Research Foundation of SUNY at the University of Albany. This national leadership training will be offered via online training media as it was designed. Supervisors of caseworkers in public, private (if under contract with the State or county child welfare agency), and/or tribal child welfare agencies will be the target audience for these training opportunities. The Workforce Institute should focus attention on describing how they will recruit States and jurisdictions to offer the training to all supervisors in a county, region, or State in order to create saturation. The Workforce Institute will describe the ways they intend to

work with States to implement the curriculum statewide and to address their understanding of the steps that they will need to work through with a State in order for this to be possible (for example, memorandums of understanding with States, provision of technical assistance to support statewide implementation, and number of jurisdictions proposed throughout the funding period).

Leadership Academy for Deans and Directors

NCWWI will develop and deliver a new leadership offering for deans and directors of Schools of Social Work. Schools of Social Work often serve as exemplars for universities across the country seeking to promote community engagement. Community engagement requires institutional leadership that builds partnerships across the range of agencies, political and economic systems, and citizens living and working in a wide variety of locales. Building on a long history and university context for the 21st century, deans and directors of Schools of Social Work can be transformational leaders. They have the capacity to bring about systems change in their own units as well as collaborating on change projects with leaders of child welfare agencies.

The field of child welfare has historically been most closely aligned with the social work profession. Federally-funded training and education partnerships between child welfare agencies and social work programs have developed in more than 35 states and are important pathways to employment in child welfare. This is an opportune time for this Academy, as the current federal focus on the social and emotional well-being of children and families requires a renewed focus on the preparation of the workforce for delivering promising practices and evidence-based interventions, and it requires the determination of agencies to hire and support a professionally trained and high performing workforce. Developing a leadership academy for social work deans and directors focused on child welfare partnerships will support this important and evolving work.

Leadership Academy for Child Welfare Agency Directors

The Workforce Institute will develop and deliver a new leadership offering for Child Welfare Agency Directors. Successful child welfare systemic change requires leadership from Agency Directors who operate in a political environment and who have to manage operations within limited budgets. There are few forums for Child Welfare Agency Directors to share experiences and to problem-solve with others in similar environments. The purpose of this Leadership Academy is to assist Child Welfare Agency Directors to be transformational leaders. They have the capacity to bring about systems change in their own agencies, and collaborate on change projects with leaders in related fields.

The Workforce Institute will develop and implement a Child Welfare Leadership Academy for child welfare agency directors in order to increase the ability of agencies, schools, and other partners to strengthen the workforce and provide leadership for systemic change to improve outcomes for children and families. Developing a leadership academy for child welfare agency directors focused on child welfare partnerships will support this important and evolving work.

Organizational Interventions

Workforce Projects

Between 2008 and 2013, CB funded five individual cooperative agreements to implement Comprehensive Workforce Projects. Each Workforce project, in partnership with one or more public, private (if under contract with the State or county government), or tribal child welfare agencies, conducted a thorough assessment of the child welfare agency's organizational health and then implemented an organizational intervention designed to address the needs. Great advances were made in developing a comprehensive organizational health assessment in a number of the projects and innovative projects were selected in a few of the grants. However, having the projects housed separately may have created a barrier for greater learning about organizational effectiveness at a national level, which is the rationale for requiring that the workforce projects be closely linked with the learning and interventions taking place through the Workforce Institute. For the purpose of this funding opportunity, the Workforce Institute will choose three

to five jurisdictions to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the recruitment, training, and retention system of the child welfare agency and then will implement an organizational intervention designed to improve clearly stated outcomes. Plans for these workforce projects will be proactive, strategic, collaborative, and sustainable.

The grantee may propose workforce projects that aim to assist a jurisdiction to assess their workforce capacity in a number of domains. Based on the identification of workforce needs in its preliminary assessment, the grantee will propose a preliminary plan that identifies specific activities that will be undertaken to address its critical workforce challenges. The Workforce Institute will have the freedom to consider and propose a wide range of activities for inclusion in their workforce projects. The Workforce Institute and its partner(s) may propose to develop a new approach to a unique problem, identify existing best or promising practices they intend to use, and/or present a model for selecting workforce interventions and implementing systemic change. Workforce projects will be developed and revised in consultation with CB after award of the cooperative agreement and plans will not be implemented until they are approved by the assigned federal project officer.

In summary, the Workforce Institute organizational intervention projects piece of this initiative are expected to confront issues related to staff recruitment, training, supervision, management, and retention that include, but are not limited to, topics such as effective hiring practices and decision making, adequate and competent supervision, supportive mentoring, caseworker workload, cultural competence, worker safety, and supportive, professional organizational culture. All of the workforce strategies that the grantee and its partner(s) choose to pursue must be consistent with both the guiding principles of this FOA and with the applicable agency's mission. An important objective of this partnership will be to assist the agency in sustaining its systemic change initiative and to integrate its staff recruitment and retention approaches into the agency's strategic plan.

Technical Assistance to States and Tribes

The Workforce Institute may also determine that in order to achieve the goals of this FOA, it is necessary to provide time-limited, tailored technical assistance to specific jurisdictions. The Workforce Institute will implement an application process for jurisdictions and tribes to apply to the Workforce Institute for direct assistance around a specific workforce development agenda. Tailored technical assistance may include site visits to assist the jurisdiction with assessment, work planning, coaching, and consultation. Tailored technical assistance may be necessary for a State or jurisdiction that seeks to implement LAMM or LAS statewide. Proposed technical assistance must be considered in consultation with CB, coordinated with other T/TA service providers, and approved by the federal project officer for the project prior to delivery.

Building Evidence of Best Practices in Workforce Development

National Advisory Board

In collaboration with CB, the Workforce Institute will establish a National Child Welfare Workforce Advisory Board (Advisory Board) that will review the Workforce Institute's approaches to university partnerships, leadership development, organizational interventions, and building evidence of best practices. The Advisory Board will offer recommendations to the Workforce Institute regarding strategies to address national workforce issues. The Advisory Board is expected to provide the Workforce Institute with expert consultation that will help to build the capacity of the national child welfare workforce and improve outcomes for children.

Workforce Development Framework

Due to a myriad of factors, it seems that often public child welfare agencies lack a cohesive and comprehensive plan for assessing their greatest workforce needs and then developing strategies to address these findings. There is a need for a workforce development framework that could guide the decisions of leaders in public child welfare agencies. This framework will provide a roadmap for workforce development strategies and will assist States and jurisdictions in compiling the information they need to

respond appropriately to the new Child and Family Services Plan requirements requesting greater detail regarding the composition, training, and qualifications of the child welfare workforce.

It appears that the biggest challenges to building leadership capacity across the current NCWWI components have centered on the work environment when participants in LAMM, LAS, and traineeships try to implement new practices. After individuals are recruited, selected and trained in meaningful ways, they need to be placed in work environments that are conducive to professional growth and providing high-quality services to children and families. In the cross-site evaluation of MSW and BSW traineeships conducted by NCWWI, students in their final year of education indicated their commitment to stay in child welfare agencies for 5 to 10 years. However, when these same students were interviewed just one year later during their first year of employment, they indicated that they intended to stay for only the 1 or 2 years required to complete their stipend requirement. It appears that many child welfare professionals feel the organizational environment is prohibitive to professional growth and advancement. Worker turnover is an important child welfare workforce issue to explore and address because when workers leave their jobs, there are important implications in cost -- both for the agencies where they work and for the families and children they serve.

Having a positive organizational culture and climate has been identified as being critical to retaining a skilled and educated workforce in child welfare. The next CB-funded Workforce Institute will respond to those challenges by developing a Workforce Development Framework (similar to the Leadership Competency Framework developed by the 2008-2013 National Child Welfare Workforce Institute). This conceptual framework will be used to guide the organizational intervention projects and technical assistance approach.

One key component of the framework should be to identify core competencies, skills, and characteristics in child welfare staff. The Workforce Institute will identify critical competencies and skills and characteristics necessary for the child welfare workforce at different levels within the child welfare workforce. Additionally, the Workforce Institute will assess existing child welfare workforce training curricula and identify gaps where critical competencies and CB content priorities are not sufficiently addressed.

Knowledge Development and Knowledge Management

The National Child Welfare Workforce will take on new work that builds knowledge about the child welfare workforce and examines the relationship of workforce development to the well-being of children, youth, and families.

Grantees are encouraged to select two areas of intervention research to focus attention over the project period. This may include, but is not limited to, studying what the role of leadership is in improving workforce retention and service outcomes. For example, is there a link between leadership skills and implementing change initiatives and the impact on workforce retentions, quality of supervision, and better outcomes for children, youth, and families? Or, what workforce interventions stem turnover? Grantees could propose a study of the relationship between certain child outcomes and the characteristics and practices of the workforce.

The Workforce Institute is expected to collect and manage existing information about best and promising practices in leadership and workforce development from current and previous CB demonstration, capacity building, and quality improvement grants.

Technology

CB expects for the Workforce Institute to carefully consider opportunities to use new technologies when making decisions about project activities, curricula, learning communities, product design, and dissemination strategies. In addition to making training modules and other products electronically accessible, the grantee will be encouraged to take full advantage of innovations (e.g, websites, social networking, workspace sharing, livecasting, presentation sharing, mobile applications, etc.) that use web-

and mobile-based technologies when these approaches are feasible, practical, and appropriate, and when they are likely to increase access for target audiences and achieve project objectives.

Specific Tasks to Be Performed by the Workforce Institute During the Planning, Implementation and Sustainability Phases

Thoughtful planning is a necessary prerequisite to successful implementation of the Workforce Institute's activities. While ongoing revision of implementation strategies may be appropriate later in the project period, CB requires that initial planning phases for the Workforce Institute's major activity areas will be completed within 6 to 12 months. The implementation phases for the Workforce Institute's major activities will be 48 to 54 months in duration. During the final 6 months of the project, the Workforce Institute will compile evaluation data, present findings, and prepare final reports to CB.

The Workforce Institute will present preliminary plans for both planning, implementation and sustainability activities. Proposals will include plans for each of the Workforce Institute's major activity areas. Immediately after the award, and prior to implementation, the grantee's planning work plan will be subject to review, revision, and final approval by CB.

Each grantee is required to submit a design that clearly and concisely describes a strategy for planning and implementing the Workforce Institute's major activities. These major components are: University Partnership To Support Workforce Development; Leadership Training Across the Child Welfare Career Spectrum (Deans and Directors, State Agency Directors, Middle Managers, and Supervisors); Organizational Intervention To Improve Workforce Retention (Workforce Development Projects and Tailored Technical Assistance); and Building Evidence of Best Practice in Workforce Development (Advisory Board, Workforce Development Framework, Building and Managing Knowledge on Best Practices in Workforce Development, and Dissemination).

Due to the nature of its tasks, the Workforce Institute will not be required to organize all of its activities into a single planning phase and subsequent implementation phase. Grantees must propose appropriate timelines for planning and implementation specific to each of the major activity areas. For example, some of the Workforce Institute's planning phases for cross-site evaluation are contingent upon the preparedness of university partners to participate in the process of evaluation design. Each grantee is encouraged to be familiar with the approximate dates shown below when developing its schedule of proposed activities. These do not cover all of the key tasks but give guidance on approximate dates for specific activities.

Grant Activity/Event

- Project Period Begins: Approximate date -- October 1, 2013
- Planning Phases Begin For Organization Intervention Projects: Approximate date -- October 1, 2013
- LAMM and LAS Trainings Begin (grantees have flexibility in proposing structure and timeline for the other training offerings): Approximate date -- January 2014
- University Partnership Projects and Organizational Intervention Projects Selected: Approximate date -- March 2014
- Traineeship Stipends Awarded to Students: Approximate date -- October 2014
- Organizational Intervention Project Implemented: Approximate date -- March 2014

Grantees are also expected to describe the processes that will be used during their planning activities to revise their implementation plans and address anticipated implementation, logistical, and administrative issues. A revised implementation plan for each of the Workforce Institute's major activity areas will be due to CB within 10 months after the award of the cooperative agreement.

Work Plan

The Workforce Institute will be afforded considerable flexibility in developing its strategies to enhance building capacity within the public child welfare workforce. However, CB expects the Workforce Institute to complete the tasks described in this announcement within the general timeframes indicated below,

unless otherwise negotiated and approved. Grantees are encouraged to reference this framework when developing a more detailed proposal design that includes action items specific to the particular processes and activities they propose.

Grantees that propose alternative planning and implementation timelines must provide sufficient rationale to support the feasibility of these plans. All grantees must explain how their approaches will ensure that all of the program requirements are completed in the project period.

Additional Project Requirements

See Section IV.2, Additional Assurances and Certification.

References

Administration for Children and Families. (2006). *Summary of the Results of the 2001–2004 Child and Family Services Reviews*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Administration for Children, Youth and Families (2012). Integrating Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being for Children and Families in Child Welfare: A Summary of Administration on Children, Youth, and Families Projects in Fiscal Year 2012.

Lynch Thomas, Miranda (2012). One Hundred Years of Children’s Bureau Support to the Child Welfare Workforce. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 6:4, 357-375.

Mitchell, L., Walters, R., Lynch Thomas, M., Denniston, J., McIntosh, H., Brodowski, M. (2012). The Children’s Bureau’s Vision for the Future of Child Welfare *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 6(4), 550-567.

National Child Welfare Workforce Institute. (2012). *NCWWI child welfare traineeships: Promising approaches & strategies*. Albany, NY: Author.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children’s Bureau (2011). *Federal Child and Family Services Reviews Aggregate Report, Round 2, Fiscal Years 2007-2010*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/results/fcfsr_report.pdf.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$4,100,000
Expected Number of Awards:	1
Award Ceiling:	\$4,100,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$2,000,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$4,100,000 Per Budget Period

Length of Project Periods:

60-month project with five 12-month budget periods

Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3*.

Application Disqualification Factors.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

The initial award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the federal government. The projects awarded will be for a project period of 60 months.

Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement

A cooperative agreement is a specific method of awarding federal assistance in which substantial federal involvement is anticipated. A cooperative agreement clearly defines the respective responsibilities of CB and the grantee prior to the award. CB anticipates that agency involvement will produce programmatic benefits to the recipient otherwise unavailable to them for carrying out the project. The involvement and collaboration includes:

- CB and recipient joint collaboration in the performance of key programmatic activities (i.e., strategic planning, implementation, information technology enhancements, T/TA, publications or products, and evaluation);
- Close monitoring by CB of the requirements stated in this FOA that limit the grantee's discretion with respect to scope of services offered; and
- Close monitoring by CB during performance, which may, in order to ensure compliance with the intent of this funding, exceed those federal stewardship responsibilities customary for grant activities.
- CB must approve each activity at each project level.

Please see *Section IV.5 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of federal funds awarded under this announcement.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Under the funding legislation, eligible applicants are public or other nonprofit institutions of higher learning. Consortia of the eligible institutions of higher education described above are encouraged to apply, and Collaborative and interdisciplinary efforts are encouraged, but applications must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant. The primary applicant must be one of the entities listed under "Eligible Applicants," above.

Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other*.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

Refer to *Section IV.2* for information on pre-application submissions.

III.3. Other

DUNS Number and System for Award Management Eligibility Requirements (SAM.gov)

All applicants must have a DUNS number (www.dnb.com) and be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM, www.sam.gov) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and should a grant be made, throughout the life of the award. Finalize a new, or renew an existing, registration at least two weeks before the application deadline. This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application or receive an award. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew at least two weeks before the deadline. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at: [https:// www.sam.gov /sam /transcript /SAM Quick Guide Grants Registrations-v1.6.pdf](https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/SAM_Quick_Guide_Grants_Registrations-v1.6.pdf).

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

APPLICATION DISQUALIFICATION FACTORS

Applications from individuals, foreign entities, or sole proprietorship organizations will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Application Submission Disqualifications

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format. Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times. Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this

announcement.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.** See "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

CB Operations Center
c/o Lux Consulting Group
8405 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (866) 796-1591
Email: cb@luxcg.com

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at the ACF Funding Opportunities Forms webpage at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):

Available at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](http://www.Grants.gov) website and at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING ACF APPLICATIONS

FOR ALL ACF APPLICATIONS:

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

The AOR is an individual(s), named by the applicant/recipient organization, who is authorized to act for the applicant/recipient and to assume the obligations imposed by the federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or awards. Each applicant must designate an AOR.

AOR authorization is part of the registration process at www.Grants.gov, where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the System for Award Management (SAM).

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Follow the instructions provided in this application formatting section to ensure that your application does not exceed the page limitations and can be printed efficiently and consistently for the competitive review.

Accepted Font Styles:

All applicants must use 12-point font in Times New Roman (TNR).

Page Limitations for Application Submissions

Applicants must observe the page limitations listed later in this section. Page limitations do not include OMB-approved Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms

All applications must be double-spaced and in Times New Roman, 12-point font. An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the extra pages removed and these pages will not be reviewed.

Page limitations apply to electronically submitted and paper format applications. For applications that are single-spaced and/or one-and-a-half spaced (in whole or in part, except for the exempted elements listed later in this section) and/or use a font smaller than TNR, 12-point, ACF will use a formula to determine the actual number of pages. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and then compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1500 characters, which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Extra pages resulting from this formula will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Be sure to print the Project Description and Appendices documents on paper and count the number of pages for each file before submission. Keep the printed copy as a hard copy of your application for your files.

Copies Required

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the AOR Authorization and E-Biz POC instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures.

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they will print out onto 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

The Project Description and Appendices files must be numbered separately. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Do not scan more than one page of a document on a single page. Application pages with two or more pages of a document scanned to it will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements listed earlier in this section: the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required Standard Forms, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, contracts, and the Budget Justification. These items may be single-spaced. The Project Summary/Abstract is required to be one single-spaced page in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. The Budget Justification may be single-spaced but must be in 12-point font. Resumes must be in 12-point font, but are not required to be double-spaced. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

Application Upload Requirements

Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations for each, are listed later in this section.

To adhere to the two file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe

Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

However, ACF understands that all applicants may not have access to this software. Grants.gov offers a listing of several free PDF conversion programs. These programs can be found on Grants.gov by clicking on 'Applicant Resources' on the far left side of the home page, and then by following the link to 'Download Software' near the top of the screen, or by clicking [HERE](#). Free PDF software is available on this page that will allow users to convert and merge PDF documents. As an example, ACF is providing written instructions on downloading and using one type of free software listed at Grants.gov at the following link: [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov/ sites/default/ files/assets/ pdf995 instructions for video.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/pdf995_instructions_for_video.pdf). A video demonstrating this process is also available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOly0HwXPsa>. ACF does not endorse any of the software listed on Grants.gov, and applicants are not required to use a specific type of PDF conversion software to submit an application.

NOTE: Applications submitted via www.Grants.gov will undergo a validation check. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for more information. The validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review. If an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date and the application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov

Limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,*,%/,#) including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks, within application form fields, and file attachment names. An underscore (_) may be used to separate a file name.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the

affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options* for more information.

Signatures

An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper format application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. Applications must be in two sections. The first section must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification, and the second section must contain all required Appendices. The pages of the two sections must be separately and sequentially numbered.

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.

Instructions on the order of assembly for paper application submissions are available later in this formatting section.

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

Page Limitations and Content of the Application for All Submission Formats:

NOTE: ADDITIONAL CB-SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL APPLICATIONS UNDER THIS FOA

The Project Description file is limited to 75 pages and must include these items in this order:

1. Table of Contents
2. Abstract
3. Objectives and Need for Assistance
4. Approach
5. Evaluation
6. Organizational Capacity
7. Logic Model
8. Line Item Budget and Budget Justification

The Appendices file is limited to 50 pages and must include these items in this order:

1. Certifications and Assurances
2. Proof of Legal Status (if applicable)
3. Third-party agreements
4. Staff and Position Data (e.g., resumes, job descriptions, organizational charts)
5. Indirect Cost Rate Letter (if applicable)

Do not include Standard Forms or OMB-approved forms as part of the Project Description file or the Appendices file. For electronic applicants, Standard Forms are submitted separately at Grants.gov. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms are not included in the page limitations.

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at [ACF Funding Opportunities Forms](#) or at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#) unless specified otherwise.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Form is available at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html . General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/ . Applicants may also contact OHRP by email (ohrp@csophs.dhhs.gov) or by phone (240-453-6900).
Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes	Submission of a certification is required prior to award for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for the first budget year of a multi-year project; or for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for a one-year (12 months) project period; or for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for a multiyear project to be fully funded.	Applicants are advised of the following requirement contained in Section 523 of the "Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008," (P.L. 110-161, Division G). This requirement remains in effect: Sec. 523. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract in an amount greater than \$5,000,000 or to award a grant in excess of such amount unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, the contractor or

		<p>grantee has filed all Federal tax returns required during the three years preceding the certification, has not been convicted of a criminal offense under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and has not, more than 90 days prior to certification, been notified of any unpaid Federal tax assessment for which the liability remains unsatisfied, unless the assessment is the subject of an installment agreement or offer in compromise that has been approved by the Internal Revenue Service and is not in default, or the assessment is the subject of a non-frivolous administrative or judicial proceeding. [Emphasis Added]</p> <p>Accordingly, if applicants request more than \$5 million in Federal funds for the first budget year of a multiyear project to be funded in FY 2010, or as a multiyear project to be fully funded in FY 2010, the applicant will be required to submit a certification complying with the requirements, prior to receiving an award.</p>
DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration..	<p>A DUNS number is required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http:// fedgov.dnb. com/ webform.</p> <p>Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov.</p>	<p>A DUNS number and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.</p> <p>See <i>Section III.3. Other</i> for information on obtaining a DUNS number and registration at http://www.sam.gov.</p>
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If applicable, submission of this form is due at the time of application.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this

		commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of this Certification is required for all applications.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.

NOTE: ADDITIONAL CB-SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL APPLICATIONS UNDER THIS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

The acceptance of funds for projects responsive to this announcement will signify the applicant's assurance that it will comply with the following requirements:

- Have the project fully functioning within 90 days following the notification of the grant award;
- Participate, if CB chooses, in a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract that relates to this funding announcement;
- Submit all performance indicator data, program, evaluation, and financial reports in a timely manner, in the recommended formats (to be provided) and submit the final report on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program;
- Submit a copy of the final report, the final evaluation report, and any program products to CB and Information Gateway within 90 days of the project end date. This is in addition to the standard

requirement that the final program and evaluation report must also be submitted to the Grants Management Specialist and the federal project officer; and

- Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to: provide for the principal investigator, project director, project manager, the evaluator, and other key partners to attend two planning meetings described in this funding announcement (first year only) in Washington, D.C.; provide for key staff and other key partners to attend an annual three-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C.; and
- Provide for a minimum of ten traineeship projects for professional education stipends.

There are a number of additional assurances that apply to the child welfare traineeships. They are as follows:

- Provide assurances that each individual (recipient) who receives a stipend with a traineeship will enter in to an agreement with the institution under which the recipient agrees and that the recipient will be employed for a period of years equivalent to the period of the traineeship, in a public or nonprofit child welfare agency after completing the education for which the traineeship was awarded.
- Provide assurances that the institutions involved in the university projects will enter agreements with child welfare agencies for the onsite training of traineeship recipients and will develop and implement a system that tracks the employment record of recipients for a three year period after they complete the child welfare services program of study for the purpose of determining the percentage of recipients who secure employment in the field of child welfare services and remain employed in the field.

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

The Project Description

Part I: The Project Description Overview

Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Funding Opportunity Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

General Expectations and Instructions

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

Part II: General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description

Introduction

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

Project Summary/Abstract

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Objectives And Need For Assistance

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance including the nature and scope of the problem must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as well as data describing the needs of the target population and the proposed service area as needed. When appropriate, a literature review should be used to support the objectives and needs described in this section.

Outcomes Expected

Identify the outcomes to be derived from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall goals of the project as described in *Section I. Funding Opportunity Description*. If research is part of the proposed work, outcomes must include hypothesized results and implications of the proposed research.

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

NOTE- CB-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF ALL APPLICANTS

Collaboration

The Workforce Institute must partner closely with CB throughout the funding period to meet the goals of this program announcement. As a participant in a cooperative agreement, the grantee can expect to closely collaborate with CB in the review of its proposed activities. In some cases, they will revise and jointly develop key project strategies. CB must approve project plans and activities prior to implementation. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their strategy for working closely with the federal project officer.

Responsibility for supporting workforce development in child welfare systems is not the sole role of any single project or entity. In addition to its partnership with CB, the grantee will be responsible for collaborating with other projects, including but not limited to, National Child Welfare Resource Centers, the Child Welfare Information Gateway, and other CB-funded and other federal interagency projects aimed at increasing the capacity of the workforce to meet the needs of children and families. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their approach to collaborating with other CB-funded initiatives.

Outreach and Engagement

The Workforce Institute must engage its intended consumers (child welfare workforce, public child welfare agencies, and institutions of higher education) in the development and refinement of its training activities and products. The project will seek feedback from members of its target audience(s) throughout the project period to better understand workforce development needs, inform project activities, review curricula and product-related content, and proposed dissemination strategies. Applicants should describe their plans for outreach and engagement.

University Partnership Projects

CB intends for BSW and MSW professional education traineeships to increase the knowledge and skills of individual stipend recipients, to address the specific needs and workforce challenges of local child welfare systems, and to build the capacity of college and university social work programs to prepare students for careers in the child welfare workforce. The Workforce Institute's stipend projects are expected to ensure the meaningful integration of each stipend project into a partnering child welfare agency's broader, comprehensive plan for workforce capacity-building.

The applicant should describe the steps they will take to identify and select their university partners and the ways they hope to link this component of the Workforce Institute with other components.

In addition to serving as a means to address specific agencies' workforce challenges, University Partnership projects are intended to encourage partnering institutions of higher education to develop and

improve their child welfare training curricula and programs. The Workforce Institute will partner with institutions of higher education that are prepared to provide competency-based child welfare training that places emphasis on developing critical knowledge, values, skills, and characteristics that are necessary to respond to complex problems confronting children and families in the child welfare system. The goal of these projects is to support Schools of Social Work to implement specialized curriculum to prepare the best and brightest students for the unique demands of serving in public child welfare. Applicants should demonstrate insight in describing these unique demands of child welfare professionals and propose strategies for helping selected university projects further specialize their curriculum to effectively prepare students for work in public child welfare agencies. Applications that clearly demonstrate how they will assess if there is a strong partnership in place between the School of Social Work and the local public child welfare agency will be given preference.

Applicants will describe how the selected university projects will provide:

- Financial assistance to select trainees;
- An educational program that increases the knowledge and skills and leadership capacity of individual stipend recipients to address the social and emotional needs of children, youth and families served by child welfare agencies;
- The development and improvement of child welfare curricula on the developmental and functional consequences of trauma and evidence based practices to increase their skill level, professional practice and leadership ability, and to support retention in child welfare workforce; and
- An organizational intervention component linking the school of social work with the local public child welfare agency. This applicant should discuss how organizational intervention will be tailored to the specific needs of the local public child welfare agency and will describe evaluation component of this component of the initiative.

Leadership Training

Applicants have considerable flexibility in their proposals to further specify particular groups to whom its leadership training and services will be aimed, to define the scope of curricula and activities that will be provided, and to propose the number of professionals that will be served. The application should address the following components of leadership training.

Leadership Academy for Middle Managers

The Workforce Institute will use the LAMM curriculum that was developed and evaluated by NCWWI under the 2003-2008 cooperative agreement between the CB and the Research Foundation of SUNY at the University of Albany. LAMM will be delivered to mid-level managers in public, private (if under contract with the State or county child welfare agency), and/or tribal child welfare agencies. For the purposes of this program component, middle managers include: State or tribal, central office, regional and district child welfare administrators, assistant directors and staff; managers employed at the State/central office or regional office that provide support to local child welfare offices; State and tribal child welfare program managers; and program directors at private agencies under contract with the State or county to provide child welfare services.

For the purposes of this announcement, CB will no longer require that the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers be delivered in cities which are also sites of CB Regional Offices. CB is interested in innovative strategies to deliver the leadership curriculum effectively and efficiently to as many child welfare Middle Managers as possible and even more specifically is interested in evaluating if the training is more effective if provided to multiple middle managers in the same jurisdiction. The successful bidder will describe a strategy and provide a rationale to support how it will be successful. Applicants should focus particular attention in proposing how they will recruit State foster care and adoption, and in-home managers throughout the life of the project.

Leadership Academy for Supervisors

The Workforce Institute will use the LAS online curriculum that was developed and evaluated by NCWWI under the 2003-2008 cooperative agreement between the CB and the Research Foundation of SUNY at the University of Albany. This national leadership training will be offered via online training media as it was designed. Supervisors of caseworkers in public, private (if under contract with the State or county child welfare agency), and/or tribal child welfare agencies will be the target audience for these training opportunities. Applicants should focus attention on describing how they will recruit States and jurisdictions to offer the training to all supervisors in a county, region, or State in order to create saturation. Applicants should describe the ways they intend to work with States to implement the curriculum statewide and to address their understanding of the steps that they will need to work through with a state in order for this to be possible (for example, MOUs with States, provision of technical assistance to support statewide implementation, number of jurisdictions proposed throughout the funding period).

Leadership Academy for Deans and Directors

The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute will develop and implement a Child Welfare Leadership Academy for social work deans, directors and chairs in order to increase the ability of school and agency partners to prepare and lead the child welfare workforce in providing more effective services to children, families and communities. Applicants should address how they intend to develop this new offering and how they intend to engage participants in this opportunity.

Leadership Academy for Child Welfare Agency Directors

The Workforce Institute will develop and implement a Child Welfare Leadership Academy for child welfare agency directors in order to increase the ability of agencies, schools and other partners to strengthen the workforce and provide leadership for systemic change to improve outcomes for children and families. Applicants should discuss how they will develop this new offering and how they will engage participants.

Organizational Interventions

Workforce Projects

An applicant may propose workforce projects that aim to assist a jurisdiction to assess their workforce capacity in a number of domains. Based on the identification of workforce needs in its preliminary assessment, the applicant will propose a preliminary plan which identifies specific activities that will be undertaken to address its critical workforce challenges. Applicants have the freedom to consider and propose a wide range of activities for inclusion in their workforce projects. An applicant and its partner(s) may propose to develop a new approach to a unique problem, identify existing best or promising practices they intend to use, and/or present a model for selecting workforce interventions and implementing systemic change. Workforce projects will be further developed and revised in consultation with CB after award of the cooperative agreement and the plans will not be implemented until they are approved by the assigned federal project officer. Applicants should describe their plan for selecting and implementing three to four substantive projects.

Technical Assistance to States and Tribes

Based on its assessment of need, the applicant must provide a preliminary plan describing the conditions under which tailored technical assistance (tailored TA) might be warranted and the types of technical assistance that the project would be prepared to provide. Tailored TA may include one or more site visits to assist the jurisdiction with assessment, work planning, coaching, and consultation. The applicant must provide an estimate of the quantity of tailored TA that would be available in light of other project activities.

The Building Evidence of Best Practices in Workforce Development

National Advisory Board

In collaboration with CB, the Workforce Institute will establish a National Child Welfare Workforce Advisory Board (Advisory Board) that will review the Workforce Institute's approaches to university partnerships, leadership development, organizational interventions, and building evidence of best practices. The Advisory Board will offer recommendations to the Workforce Institute regarding strategies to address national workforce issues. The Advisory Board is expected to provide the Workforce Institute with expert consultation that will help to build the capacity of the national child welfare workforce and improve outcomes for children.

Applicants must propose a detailed plan for establishing the Advisory Board and for the efficient and best utilization of its expertise over the course of the project. In its proposal an applicant must describe:

- The process for selecting the Advisory Board's membership;
- The level of commitment expected of Advisory Board participants;
- The size and structure of the Board; and
- The frequency and nature of Advisory Board activities.

Workforce Development Framework

The applicant will describe their process for creating a Workforce Development Framework. The applicant should describe how this conceptual framework will be used to guide the organizational intervention projects and technical assistance approach.

One key component of the framework should be to identify core competencies, skills and characteristics in child welfare staff. The Workforce Institute will identify critical competencies and skills and characteristics necessary for the child welfare workforce at different levels within the child welfare workforce. The Workforce Institute will assess existing child welfare workforce training curricula and identify gaps where critical competencies and CB content priorities are not sufficiently addressed. Applicants should describe their proposed processes for completing this component of the project.

Knowledge Development and Knowledge Management

The National Child Welfare Workforce will take on new work that builds knowledge about the child welfare workforce and examines the relationship of workforce development to the well-being of children, youth, and families.

Applicants are encouraged to select two areas of intervention research to focus attention over the project period. This may include but is not limited to studying what the role of leadership is in improving workforce retention and service outcomes. For example, is there a link between leadership skills and implementing change initiatives and the impact on workforce retentions, quality of supervision and better outcomes for children, youth and families? Or, what workforce interventions stem turnover? Applicants could propose a study of the relationship between certain child outcomes and the characteristics and practices of the workforce.

The Workforce Institute is expected to collect and manage existing information about best and promising practices in leadership and workforce development from current and previous CB demonstration, capacity building, and quality improvement grants. Applicants should describe their strategy to complete this key component of the initiative.

Project Timeline and Milestones

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function, or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the

approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Applicants must describe the plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation should monitor ongoing processes and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget, and other resources), key processes, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. The plan must be supported by a logic model and must explain how the inputs, processes and outcomes will be measured, and how the resulting information will be used to inform improvement of funded activities.

Applicants must describe the systems and processes that will support the organization's performance management requirements through effective tracking of performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g. assigned skilled staff, data management software) in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles for implementing the program performance evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

ACF is committed to use the most rigorous methods that are appropriate to the evaluation questions and feasible within budget and other constraints. Rigor is not restricted to impact evaluations, but is also necessary in implementation or process evaluations, descriptive studies, outcome evaluations, and formative evaluations; and in both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Rigor requires ensuring that inferences about cause and effect are well founded (internal validity); requires clarity about populations, settings, or circumstances to which results can be generalized (external validity); and requires the use of measures that accurately capture the intended information (measurement reliability and validity).

The Workforce Institute will develop a rigorous evaluation design using multiple measures to document and determine the effectiveness of the Workforce Institute's processes and major areas of activity. The Workforce Institute is expected to employ both qualitative and quantitative methods in its evaluation of process and outcome measures. If feasible, CB expects the Workforce Institute to include in its evaluation plan one or more appropriate comparison groups for evaluating the effect of its leadership training activities, including those for middle managers and supervisors. The grantee will have considerable flexibility to propose an evaluation plan for the Workforce Institute that will contribute to and promote evidence-based strategies, practices, and programs. The Workforce Institute's plan must include a detailed description of both process and outcomes evaluation components:

- The process evaluation must assess the implementation of the integrated project, as well as linkages between the collaborative partners that will help ensure that the identified needs of the child welfare workforce are met; and
- The outcomes component must use a sufficiently rigorous approach to examine how the approaches used in this demonstration project affect key outcomes of interest. The preliminary outcome evaluation must be sufficiently rigorous to provide credible evidence that the effects on key outcomes can be attributed to Workforce Institute interventions.

Evaluation produces one type of evidence. A learning organization with a culture of continual improvement requires many types of evidence, including not only evaluation but also descriptive research studies, performance measures, financial and cost data, survey statistics, and program administrative data. Further continual improvement requires systematic approaches to using information, such as regular data-driven reviews of performance and progress.

The Workforce Institute will be required to demonstrate how they will rigorously evaluate their

projects. Rigorous research incorporates the four following criteria (Proctor, et al, 2010):

Credibility: Ensuring what is intended to be evaluated is actually what is being evaluated; making sure that descriptions of the phenomenon or experience being studied are accurate and recognizable to others; ensuring that the method used is the most definitive and compelling approach that is available and feasible for the question being addressed.

Applicability: Generalizability of findings beyond current project (i.e. when findings “fit” into contexts outside the study situation). Ensuring the population being studied represents one or more of the population being served by the program.

Consistency: Consistently following and clearly describing processes and methods, so that someone else could replicate the approach and other studies can confirm what is found.

Neutrality: Producing results that are as objective as possible and acknowledge the bias brought to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of results.

Funded Activities Evaluation Plan

Applicants must describe the plan for rigorous evaluation of funded activities. The evaluation must be supported by a logic model. The evaluation must assess processes and progress towards the goals and objectives of the project, and whether the project is having the expected effects and impacts. The evaluation plan must specify expected outcomes and any research questions. The plan must discuss how the results of this evaluation will provide greater understanding and improvement of the funded activities. The plan must include a valid and reliable measurement plan and sound methodological design. Details regarding the proposed data collection activities, the participants, and data management, and analyses plans must be described. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles foreseen in implementation of the planned evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

Outcome Measurement

The applicant will articulate clear and measurable objectives and outcomes for its traineeship projects, organizational intervention projects, leadership academies, training and technical assistance efforts, knowledge building, and management and dissemination activities. Guided by its logic model, the successful applicant will design an evaluation plan, choose methods, develop instruments, collect data, and perform analyses that will help the project determine the degree to which key objectives and intended outcomes are achieved. While CB has identified several domains for evaluation, the design and content of the grantee’s planned activities may warrant the inclusion of additional indicators and outcomes.

In addition to the evaluation of its own activities, the Workforce Institute will also be responsible for facilitating and implementing cross-site evaluation activities.

Logic Model

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a tool that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the linkages among program elements. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project, project goals and objectives, the target population, project inputs (resources), the proposed activities/processes/outputs directed toward the target population, the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve, and the evaluation plan for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

Project Sustainability Plan

Applicants must propose a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends. Grantees are expected to sustain key elements of their grant projects, e.g., strategies or services and interventions, which have been effective in improving practices and those that have led to improved outcomes for children and families.

Describe the approach to project sustainment that will be most effective and feasible. Describe the key individuals and/or organizations whose support will be required in order to sustain program activities. Describe the types of alternative support that will be required to sustain the planned program. If the proposed project involves key project partners, describe how their cooperation and/or collaboration will be maintained after the end of federal funding.

Organizational Capacity

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Curricula Vitae (CV);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

Dissemination Plan

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended.

Third-Party Agreements

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide letters of commitment or MOU identifying the primary applicant that is responsible for administering the grant. The primary applicant must provide documentation of the commitments made by partnering organizations and describe in detail their roles and responsibilities as partners in the collaboration/consortia.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is input on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. The line-item budget detail and the budget narrative must be submitted as a single Budget Justification application component.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Special Note: *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Pub.L. 112-74), enacted December 23, 2011, limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the Federal Executive Pay scale is \$179,700 (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/12tables/html/ex.asp>). This amount reflects an individual's base salary **exclusive** of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties to the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards/subcontracts under a ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget justification using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for each year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

The applicant must allocate sufficient funds within the 5-year project period (e.g., 10 percent of the total project budget) to support the evaluation of its project and its participation in any national evaluation of CB-supported efforts, training, and/or technical assistance. Funds for evaluation must appear in the budget, and the applicant must state the percentage of the total budget that will be allocated to evaluation.

The applicants must allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the principal investigator, project director, evaluator, and key staff/partners to travel to Washington, D.C. to attend the project kick-off meeting to be held within the first 6 weeks of the project and three additional working meetings over the course of the project period.

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. When a match or cost share is required, both federal and non-federal resources must be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which the applicant is applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, and taxes.

Travel

Description: Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

Justification: For each trip show the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year per unit and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the applicant organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Contractual

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than states that are required to use 45 CFR Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134 and currently set at \$100,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

Other

Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

Indirect Charges

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a

rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

Program Income

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under federally-funded projects, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, and interest on loans made with award funds.

Justification: Describe the nature, source, and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 10/31/2015. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

- Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.
- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using www.Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov, to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Contact Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Contact Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Contact Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

Application Validation at www.Grants.gov

After an application has been successfully submitted to www.Grants.gov, it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is

still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Each time an application is submitted, or resubmitted, via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at www.Grants.gov. To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at www.Grants.gov.

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov, or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

Please Note: electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov **may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission.** All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate Agency Contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,

- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

Exemption requests must be received by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is now required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.6.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

IV.3. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **07/05/2013**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due

date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for mailed paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Extensions and/or Waiving Due Date and Receipt Time Requirements

ACF may extend an application due date and receipt time when circumstances make it impossible for applicants to submit their applications on time. These events include natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or when there are widespread disruptions of electrical service, or mail service, or in other rare cases. The determination to extend or waive due date and/or receipt time requirements rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. Agency Contacts*.

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to www.Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from www.Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.4. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this announcement with regard to E.O. 12372.

IV.5. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grants or cooperative agreements awarded under this funding opportunity announcement.

Note: Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered allowable costs under an award and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

IV.6. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Submission By Mail

CB Operations Center
c/o Lux Consulting Group
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Hand Delivery

CB Operations Center
c/o Lux Consulting Group
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.3* for information on due dates and times.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Please note: Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Maximum Points: 20

In reviewing the objectives and need for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which the application demonstrates an understanding of the issues relevant to this FOA. (0-5)

- The applicant identifies critical workforce challenges and leadership issues in the field of child welfare and demonstrates a thorough understanding of them, citing sufficient and appropriate research, literature, and/or other evidence to support its information.
- The applicant demonstrates an understanding of contextual differences in workforce and leadership and organizational effectiveness issues across public, private, and tribal child welfare agencies.
- The applicant demonstrates a strong understanding of the purpose of the Workforce Institute.
- The applicant clearly links and explains the relevance of the Workforce Institute's guiding philosophy and the program purpose to one another.
- The applicant presents a clear, concise, and appropriate vision for the role of the a national center of excellence, the Workforce Institute, in the field of public child welfare and the larger array of initiatives aimed at strengthening the child welfare workforce and promoting sustainable systems change.

The applicant presents a clear description of the proposed project that is responsive to this FOA. (0-15)

- The applicant provides a clear description of the services to be provided to the target population(s), including a clear and reasonable statement of the goals (the intended end products of an effective project) and objectives (measurable steps for reaching these goals) of the proposed project.
- The applicant's goals and objectives are based on a thorough understanding of the characteristics of its clients and the contexts in which services will be delivered.

- The applicant clearly and persuasively explains how the proposed project will contribute to achieving the goals of the authorizing legislation and the Workforce Institute as stated in this FOA.

APPROACH

Maximum Points: 40

In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

The applicant proposes a sound technical approach for the proposed project. (0-20)

- The applicant provides a clear and reasonable timeline and narrative for implementing the proposed project components, including major milestones and target dates for the following key strategy areas:
 - University Partnership Projects to Support Workforce Development
 - Leadership Training Across the Child Welfare Career Spectrum
 - Organizational Intervention Projects to Improve Workforce Retention
 - Building Evidence of Best Practice in Workforce Development
 - The applicant describes the factors that could speed or hinder project implementation and explains how these factors would be managed.
- A well-organized and well-defined logic model guides the proposed project components.
 - The logic model demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities and intended short-term and long-term outcomes.

The applicant's proposal is strongly responsive to the purposes and requirements of key strategies described in this FOA. (0-15 points)

- The applicant proposes a sound plan for establishing the University Partnership Projects to Support Workforce Development. The plan includes a detailed description of identifying, selecting, and administering professional educational traineeships.
 - The applicant describes their stipend/scholar program in detail.
 - The applicant presents a convincing plan explaining how it would ensure the meaningful integration of each university's stipend program into its partnering child welfare agency's broader plan for workforce capacity building.
 - The approach includes activities that would encourage institutions of higher education to develop and deliver new curriculum on trauma-informed and evidence-based practice.
 - This plan is consistent with the responsibilities and requirements described in the Section IV.2, University Partnerships to Support Workforce Development, in this funding announcement.
- The applicant proposes sound and detailed plans for its leadership training across the child welfare career spectrum.
 - The applicant specifies the particular groups to whom its training and services will be aimed, defines the scope of curricula and activities to be provided, and estimates the number of professionals that will be served on an annual basis.
 - The applicant proposes a sound theory of leadership development as well as effective adult education and transfer of learning models for each of its targeted populations, which include middle managers and supervisors, deans and directors, and State agency directors.
 - The applicant plans for training and distance learning are clear, reasonable, and feasible.
 - The applicant clearly describes and justifies the proposed configuration for trainings and demonstrates that this configuration is optimal based on such factors as geographic size,

- available resources, and convenience for participants from all parts of the country.
- The proposed plan includes activities that would ensure that training models and curricula would be appropriate for national audiences and complement regional and local systems of child welfare training.
- The design of the proposed training activities is evidence-based, reflects up-to-date knowledge from the research and literature on best practices and promising approaches to addressing leadership and workforce issues in the public child welfare field, and builds on current theory, research, evaluation data and best practices.
- This plan is consistent with the responsibilities and requirements described in this FOA.
- The applicant proposes a sound and detailed plan for implementing the organizational interventions to improve workforce retention.
- - The applicant outlines their plan for implementing 3-4 in-depth workforce development projects in States and tribes. These projects will focus on assisting public child welfare agencies in implementing interventions to change organizational culture resulting in workforce retention and organizational effectiveness;
 - The applicant outlines their strategy for providing technical assistance to States and tribes on topics such as: best practices in child welfare workforce recruitment, selection, retention, and organizational effectiveness and/or implementing statewide training for middle managers and supervisors;
 - This plan is consistent with the responsibilities and requirements described in this FOA.
- The applicant proposes a sound and detailed plan for the assessment and management of current knowledge and resources for training of the child welfare workforce.
 - The applicant proposes a convincing plan to identify critical workforce competencies and skills, pinpoint gaps in existing resources, and manage information about best and promising practices.
 - The applicant describes their approach to convening a national workforce advisory body;
 - The applicant describes the steps they intend to take to develop a workforce development framework and identification of core competencies in child welfare staff;
 - The plan is consistent with the responsibilities and requirements described in Section IV.2, "Building Evidence of Best Practices in Workforce Development," in this FOA.
- The applicant proposes a realistic and sound plan for its collaboration activities, consistent with the responsibilities and requirements described in Section IV.2, "Collaboration," in this FOA.
- The applicant proposes a sound and detailed plan for its dissemination activities, consistent with the responsibilities and requirements described in Section IV.2, "Dissemination," in this FOA.

The applicant is able to describe how the discrete strategies integrate to form a cohesive approach and will inform the field. (0-5)

- The applicant clearly describes how its proposed activities would meet workforce needs while integrating with existing programs and initiatives to provide a comprehensive approach to building workforce capacity without duplicating services.
- The applicant's proposed activities in each of the Workforce Institute's major activity areas complement each other and fit into a well-organized and cohesive plan for the Workforce Institute.
- The applicant describes an approach to project sustainment that will be most effective and feasible.
- The proposed activities are responsive to the critical challenges confronting the national child welfare workforce and to differences in workforce and leadership issues across public, private, and tribal child welfare agencies.
- The proposed activities are appropriately responsive to diversity among the applicant's targeted population(s).

- There are letters of commitment or memoranda of understanding from organizations, agencies, and consultants that would be partners, subcontractors, or collaborators in the proposed project.
 - These documents describe the role of the agency, organization, or consultant and detail specific tasks to be performed.
 - In addition to providing evidence of key partnerships the applicant has already established, the applicant identifies prospective partners, sufficiently describes the nature of the collaboration desired, describes in detail the role and/or function of the partners, and explains how collaborative activities would be facilitated and sustainable partnerships fostered.
 - The applicant presents a convincing strategy to secure commitments from public, private (if under contract with the State or county child welfare agency), and/or tribal child welfare agencies that would ensure buy-in and the participation of targeted professionals in the Workforce Institute's training activities.

EVALUATION

Maximum Points: 20

In reviewing the evaluation, reviewers will consider the extent to which the evaluation is expected to yield findings.

The applicant proposes a strong evaluation plan. (0-15)

- The applicant proposes a clear and convincing plan for its evaluation of the Workforce Institute's activities and satisfies the evaluation requirements described in Section IV.2, "Evaluation," in this FOA.
 - The methods of evaluation are feasible, comprehensive, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the project.
 - The evaluation plan is strongly guided by the project's logic model.
 - The methods of evaluation include process and outcome analyses for assessing the effectiveness of program strategies and the implementation process.
 - The methods of evaluation proposed include the use of strong measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the program as identified in the project logic model.
 - The evaluation includes measures of outcomes, in addition to measures of inputs and outputs.
 - The measures are objective and have strong reliability, validity, and internal consistency.
 - The applicant demonstrates a commitment to employ sound, rigorous, and feasible method(s) and measures in the finalized approach, and the applicant provides examples of possible evaluation methods and measures consistent with the evaluation questions discussed.
- The evaluation plan includes performance feedback and periodic assessment of program progress that can be used to modify the Workforce Institute's activities, as necessary, and serve as a basis for program adjustments.
- The applicant proposes a sound and reasonable plan for developing and executing a cross-site evaluation of the professional education traineeships in coordination with its sub-grantees and the four Workforce projects.
 - Consistent with the applicant's timeline, the plan describes in detail, clear action steps that the project would take to create and finalize a cross-site evaluation plan within 12 months of the start of the Workforce Institute's project period.
 - The applicant presents a sensible and brief preliminary discussion of the common evaluation questions that may be appropriate, realistic, and useful to examine across sites and programs.

- The applicant proposes a sound and reasonable plan for facilitating a coordinated evaluation of the Organizational Intervention Projects.
 - Consistent with the applicant's timeline, the plan describes in detail, clear action steps that the project would take to create and finalize a coordinated evaluation plan within 12 months of the start of the Workforce Institute's project period.
- The applicant provides appropriate, feasible, and realistic plans for using evaluation findings to produce ongoing documentation of the Workforce Institute and professional education traineeship activities and results.
- The evaluation activities are likely to yield findings or results about effective strategies and contribute to and promote evaluation research and evidence-based practices that may be used to guide replication or testing in other settings.

The applicant demonstrates sufficient capacity to conduct a rigorous evaluation. (0-5)

- The proposed evaluator(s) for the evaluation of the Workforce Institute, cross-site evaluation of the university partnership projects, and facilitation of a coordinated evaluation of the organizational intervention projects, has sufficient experience with research and/or evaluation, understands the population(s) and systems of interest, and demonstrates the necessary independence from the projects to assure objectivity.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Maximum Points: 15

The application strongly documents the ability of the applicant and partnering organizations to conduct a project of the type specified under this FOA, within the project period. (0-10)

- The applicant and any partnering organizations/institutions collectively have sufficient and relevant expertise and experience with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects.
 - The applicant and its partners and contractors, if applicable, possess experience and expertise in child welfare, training, leadership, organizational culture and organizational climate issues, and child welfare workforce challenges.
 - Each participating organization (including partners and/or contractors) possesses the organizational capability to fulfill its assigned roles and functions effectively.
- The applicant possesses sufficient knowledge and expertise to provide culturally informed and responsive training to child welfare professionals that work in State, county, and tribal systems serving diverse and overrepresented groups of children and families.
- The proposed principal investigator, project director, and key project staff possess sufficient and relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities to implement and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity effectively.
 - Key personnel possess appropriate experience and expertise in child welfare, training, leadership, organizational culture and climate issues, and child welfare workforce challenges that are applicable to their assigned roles and responsibilities.
 - The role, responsibilities and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, contractors and/or partners, is clearly defined and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project.

The applicant clearly demonstrates systematic capacity to effectively implement the proposed project and strongly documents the commitment of the applicant organization and any partnering organizations and their staff. (0-5)

- There is a sound management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time

and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.

- The plan clearly defines the role and responsibilities of the lead agency.
- The plan clearly describes the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants, if applicable.
- The applicant's proposed project will be engaged in a mutually beneficial relationship with related child welfare capacity-building work planned, anticipated, or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- The applicant has secured commitments from its key partners.
 - The applicant includes appropriate memorandum(s) of understanding or letters of commitment from other key partnering organization(s).

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Maximum Points: 5

In reviewing the budget and budget justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which. (0-5)

- The costs of the proposed project are clearly presented for each of the 5 years, and they are reasonable, thoroughly justified, and appropriate in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits.
- The applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under this FOA.

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (www.dbn.com) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section III.3. Other*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets one of the following disqualification criteria as described in *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*:

- Applications that are designated as late according to *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*,
- Applications that are submitted in paper format without prior approval of an exemption from required electronic submission (*Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*), or
- Applications with requests that exceed the award ceiling stated in *Section II. Award Information*.

For those applications that have been disqualified under the initial ACF screening, notice will be provided by postal mail or by email. See *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates* for information on Grants.gov's and ACF's acknowledgment of received applications.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. They are one element in the decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

ACF may refuse funding for projects with what it regards as unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or for projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications that have been deemed as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of such determination by postal mail.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date.

Applications will be reviewed during the summer 2013. Funded projects will have a start date no later than September 30, 2013.

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1. Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NOA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NOA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail or email. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.5. Funding Restrictions.*

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the uniform administrative requirements and cost principles of 45 CFR Part 74 (Awards And Subawards To Institutions Of Higher Education, Hospitals, Other Nonprofit Organizations, And Commercial Organizations) or 45 CFR Part 92 (Grants And Cooperative Agreements To State, Local, And Tribal Governments). The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

Prohibition Against Profit

Grantees are subject to the limitations set forth in 45 CFR Part 74, Subpart E-Special Provisions for Awards to Commercial Organizations (45 CFR § 74.81_Prohibition against profit), which states that, "... no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient even if the recipient is a commercial organization. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs."

Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations

Grantees are also subject to the requirements of 45 CFR § 87.1(c), Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which says, "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the [Health and Human Services] Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department." Therefore, organizations must take steps to completely separate the presentation of any program with religious content from the presentation of the Federally funded program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct*. If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from federal, state, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS-funded activities.

Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against federal funding of inherently religious activities, "Understanding the Regulations Related to the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative" are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/about/regulations/>. Additional information, resources, and tools for faith-based organizations is available through The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships website at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/index.html> and at the [Capacity Building Toolkits for Faith-based and Community Organizations](#).

Award Term and Condition under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Section 106 (g) of the

Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7104). For the full text of the award term, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-and-condition-for-trafficking-in-persons>. If you are unable to access this link, please contact the Grants Management Contact identified in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement to obtain a copy of the term.

Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §§ 8101-8106) requires that all organizations receiving grants from any federal agency agree to maintain a drug-free workplace. By signing the application, the Authorizing Official agrees that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace and will comply with the requirement to notify ACF if an employee is convicted of violating a criminal drug statute. Failure to comply with these requirements may be cause for debarment. Government-wide requirements for Drug-Free Workplace for Financial Assistance are found in 2 CFR part 182; HHS implementing regulations are set forth in 2 CFR § 382.400. All recipients of ACF grant funds must comply with the requirements in Subpart B - Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals, 2 CFR § 382.225. The rule is available at [Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace](#).

Debarment and Suspension

HHS regulations published in 2 CFR Part 376 implement the governmentwide debarment and suspension system guidance (2 CFR Part 180) for HHS' non-procurement programs and activities. "Non-procurement transactions" include, among other things, grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, and loans. ACF implements the HHS Debarment and Suspension regulations as a term and condition of award. Grantees may decide the method and frequency by which this determination is made and may check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) located at <https://www.sam.gov/>, although checking the EPLS is not required. More information is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Pro-Children Act

The Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7181 through 7184, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance order on the responsible entity.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. Appendices to the HHS GPS include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The general terms and

conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NoA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Applications funded by federal grant programs are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and are frequently requested under the FOIA. In accordance with the FOIA requirement to proactively disclose frequently requested materials at 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2)(D), and as part of on-going efforts to promote openness in government programs, ACF will post some of the top-ranked applications funded under this FOA in its online FOIA Reading Room at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/e-reading-room>. As required under the FOIA, each of the top-ranked applications will receive appropriate redaction of specific information to protect personal privacy and competitively sensitive commercial information. Applications chosen for posting to the FOIA Reading Room will be placed on the internet website without further notice to the applicants.

VI.3. Reporting

Grantees under this funding opportunity announcement will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. The frequency of required reporting is listed later in this section. Final reports may be submitted in hard copy to the Grants Management Office Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement. Instructions on submission of reports electronically will be provided with award documents.

Performance Progress Reports (PPR)

Notice of Award documents will inform grantees of the appropriate performance progress report form or format to use. Grantees should consult their Notice of Award documents to determine the appropriate performance progress report format required under their award. Performance progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the reporting period.

Final program performance reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. For awards that implement the use of the SF-PPR, that form may be found under "Reporting" at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Federal Financial Reports (FFR)

As of February 1, 2011, HHS began the transition from use of the SF-269, Financial Status Report (Short Form or Long Form) to the use of the SF-425 Federal Financial Report for expenditure reporting. SF-269s will no longer be accepted for expenditure reports due after that date. If an SF-269 is submitted, the ACF will return it and require the recipient to complete the SF-425.

The transition strategy is allowing individual HHS Operating Divisions to select--from a limited number of options--the approach that best fits their programs and business process. This transition does not affect completion or submission of the cash reporting to the HHS Division of Payment Management's Payment Management System (PMS). The primary features of this transition for recipients are that OPDIVs that previously required electronic submission of the SF-269 will receive the SF-425 expenditure reports electronically and, until further notice, OPDIVs that have been receiving expenditure reports in hard copy will continue to do so.

All expenditure reports will be due on one of the standard due dates by which cash reporting is required to be submitted to PMS or at the end of a calendar quarter as determined by the Operating Division. As a

result, a recipient that receives awards from more than one OPDIV may be subject to more than one approach, but will not be required to change its current means of submission or be subjected to more than eight standard due dates.

Beginning with budget periods which end from January 1 - March 31, 2011, and for all budget periods thereafter, all affected ACF grantees will be required to submit an SF-425 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award using due dates for reports to PMS.

For budget periods ending in the months of:

January 01 through March 31

April 01 through June 30

July 01 through September 30

October 01 through December 31

The FFR (SF-425) is due to ACF on:

April 30

July 30

October 30

January 30

Fillable versions of the SF-425 form in Adobe PDF and MS-Excel formats, along with instructions, are available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/forms>, www.forms.gov, and on at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. Further instructions will be provided, as necessary, with award terms and conditions that will address specific reporting periods and due dates on an award-by-award basis.

For planning purposes, ACF reporting periods for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Program Progress Reports:

Semi-Annually

Financial Reports:

Semi-Annually

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity may be subject to the Transparency Act subaward and executive compensation reporting requirements of 2 CFR Part 170. See ACF's Award Term for Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting Requirement implementing this requirement and additional award applicability information at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

SF-428 Tangible Property Report and SF-429 Real Property Status Report

As of April 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families has been requiring the use of the SF-428 (Tangible Personal Property Form) as well as the SF-429 (Real Property Status Report).

The **SF-428** is a standard form used by awarding agencies to collect information related to tangible personal property (equipment and supplies) when required by a federal financial assistance award. The form consists of the cover sheet, SF-428, and three attachments to be used as required: Annual Report; Final (Award Closeout) Report and a Disposition Request/Report. A Supplemental Sheet, SF-428S, may be used to provide detailed individual item information.

The **SF-429** is a standard report used by recipients of federal financial assistance to report real property status (Attachment A) or to request agency instructions on real property (Attachments B, C) that has been/will be provided as Government Furnished Property (GFP) or acquired (i.e., purchased or constructed) in whole or in part under a federal financial assistance award (i.e., grant, cooperative agreement, etc.). This includes real property that was improved using federal funds and real property that was donated to a federal project in the form of a match or cost share donation. This report is used for

awards that establish a federal Interest on real property.

Beginning with budget periods ending September 30, 2012, and for all budget periods thereafter, all ACF grantees are required to submit (as applicable) an SF-428 and SF-429 report as frequently as required in the terms and conditions of their award(s).

The forms are available at [http:// www.whitehouse.gov/ omb/ grants forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/forms).

VII. Agency Contacts

Program Office Contact

Randi Walters
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau Headquarters
Portals Building
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20024
Phone: (202) 205-5588
Fax: (202) 260-9345
Email: Randi.Walters@acf.hhs.gov

Office of Grants Management Contact

Robin Bunch
Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management/Division of Discretionary Grants
Aerospace Building - 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW
6th Floor East
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: (202) 401-5513
Phone 2: (202) 205-3449
Email: acfogme-grants@acf.hhs.gov

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the Internet [http:// www.hhs.gov/](http://www.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on the Internet [http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families - GRANTS homepage [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants).

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) [https:// www.cfda.gov/](https://www.cfda.gov/).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [http:// www.gpo.gov](http://www.gpo.gov).

United States Code (U.S.C.) [http:// www.gpoaccess.gov /uscode/](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/).

All required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page at [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants -forms](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms).

Grants.gov Forms Repository webpage at [http://www.grants.gov /agencies /aforms_repository_information.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp).

Versions of other Standard Forms (SF) are available on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Grants Management Forms web site at [http:// www. whitehouse.gov /omb /grants forms/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/).

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at [http:// www07.grants.gov /aboutgrants / accessibility compliance.jsp](http://www07.grants.gov/aboutgrants/accessibility_compliance.jsp).

Sign up to receive notification of ACF Funding Opportunities at www.Grants.gov
[http:// www.grants.gov / applicants /email subscription.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp).

Application Checklist

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> of the announcement. The Certification may be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms .	If applicable to the applicant, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Project Sustainability Plan	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration..	<p>Referenced in <i>Section III.3. Other</i> in the announcement. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http:// fedgov. dnb.com/ webform.</p> <p>To register at SAM, go to http:// www.sam. gov.</p>	A DUNS number and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2.Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>. Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ grants-forms and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at http://www.grants.gov/ agencies/ aforms repository information.jsp.</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>. Found at http://www. acf.hhs.gov /grants-forms.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional Documents."</p> <p>These forms are required for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that include only non-construction activities must submit the SF-424A and SF-424B, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL. 	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424 Key Contact Form	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>. Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ grants-forms and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at http://www. grants.gov/ agencies/ aforms repository information.jsp.</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

Certification Regarding Lobbying	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants-forms .	Submission is due with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	<p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>. Found at http://www. acf.hhs.gov /grants-forms.</p> <p>If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.</p>	If applicable, submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Additional information and necessary forms are available at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/ forms /index.html .	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . This is the title for the project narrative that describes the applicant's plan for the project.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.	Submission of the Project Budget is required on the appropriate Standard Form (424A or 424C) is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due as part of the Project Description by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Third-Party Agreements	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i> .	If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3</i> . If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.
Logic Model	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due with the application package by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .